In the Claims:

Claim 1 (canceled).

Claim 2 (currently amended): A method for forming an ONO stack of a floating gate transistor with a first layer of silicon dioxide formed on the floating gate and a layer of silicon nitride formed on the first silicon dioxide layer, comprising:

forming a second silicon dioxide layer by thermally depositing an oxide layer on the silicon nitride layer; and

annealing the ONO stack after the second silicon dioxide layer has been formed;

wherein the annealing is performed in a batch furnace at a temperature range of 800 to 1150 deg Celsius for 300 seconds to 1800 seconds.

Claim 3 (original): The method of Claim 2, wherein the annealing is performed in the batch furnace with a gas mixture of 5% to 100% of NO, with argon as a carrier gas.

Claim 4 (original): The method of Claim 2, wherein the annealing is performed in the batch furnace with the gas mixture of 5% to 100% of NO with nitrogen as a carrier gas.

Claim 5 (currently amended): The method of Claim 2, wherein the annealing ~~of~~ is performed in the batch furnace with the gas mixture of 5% to 100% of NO with oxygen as a carrier gas.

Claim 6 (original): The method of Claim 2, wherein the annealing is performed in the batch furnace with the gas mixture of 5% to 100% of NO with argon, nitrogen and oxygen as carrier gases.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The method of Claim 2, wherein the annealing is performed in the batch furnace with the ~~gax~~ gas mixture of 5% to 100% of N_2O with nitrogen as a carrier gas.

Claim 8 (original): The method of Claim 2, wherein the annealing is performed in the batch furnace with the gas mixture of 5% to 100% of N_2O with oxygen as a carrier gas.

Claim 9 (previously amended): The method of Claim 2, wherein the annealing of the ONO stack is performed in the batch furnace with the gas mixture of 5% to 100% of N_2O with argon as a carrier gas.

Claim 10 (previously amended): The method of Claim 2, wherein the annealing of the ONO stack is performed in the batch furnace with the gas mixture of 5% to 100% of N_2O with argon, nitrogen and oxygen as a carrier gas.

Claim 11 (currently amended): A method for forming an ONO stack of a floating gate transistor with a first layer of silicon dioxide formed on the floating gate and a layer of silicon nitride formed on the first silicon dioxide layer, comprising:

forming a second silicon dioxide layer by thermally depositing an oxide layer on the silicon nitride layer; and

annealing the ONO stack after the second silicon dioxide layer has been formed;

wherein the annealing is performed in a single wafer Rapid Thermal Annealing tool at a temperature range of 700 to 1100 deg Celsius for one second to 120 seconds.

Claim 12 (original): The method of Claim 11, wherein the annealing is performed in a single wafer Rapid Thermal Annealing tool with a gas mixture of 1% to 100% of NO, with argon as a carrier gas.

Claim 13 (original): The method of Claim 11, wherein the annealing is performed in a single wafer Rapid Thermal Annealing tool with a gas mixture of 1% to 100% of NO, with nitrogen as a carrier gas.

Claim 14 (original): The method of Claim 11, wherein the annealing is performed in a single wafer Rapid Thermal Annealing tool with a gas mixture of 1% to 100% of NO, with oxygen as a carrier gas.

Claim 15 (original): The method of Claim 11, wherein the annealing is performed in a single wafer Rapid Thermal Annealing tool with a gas mixture of 1% to 100% of NO, with carrier gases argon, nitrogen and oxygen.

Claim 16 (original): The method of Claim 11, wherein the annealing is performed in a single wafer Rapid Thermal Annealing tool with a gas mixture of 1% to 100% of N_2O, with nitrogen as a carrier gas.

Claim 17 (original): The method of Claim 11, wherein the annealing is performed in a single wafer Rapid Thermal Annealing tool with a gas mixture of 1% to 100% of N_2O, with oxygen as a carrier gas.

Claim 18 (original): The method of Claim 11, wherein the annealing is performed in a single wafer Rapid Thermal Annealing tool with a gas mixture of 1% to 100% of N_2O, with argon as a carrier gas.

Claim 19 (original): The method of Claim 11, wherein the annealing is performed in a single wafer Rapid Thermal Annealing tool with a gas mixture of 1% to 100% of N_2O, with carrier gases argon, nitrogen and oxygen.

Claims 20-25 (canceled).